


Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 1 of 8	

Complaint and Grievance Policy

Ver.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Type of Change	Approved by
00	04/11/2025	DD/MM/YYYY	Initial Release	President

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 2 of 8	

1. Purpose

This policy establishes Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) framework for addressing and resolving complaints and grievances that are not covered by other university policies. HBKU is committed to fostering a respectful and supportive environment in which all members of the University community are treated fairly.

This policy aims to ensure prompt, efficient, and equitable resolution of complaints and grievances and to promote a culture of mutual respect, accountability and constructive engagement across the University.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all HBKU employees and contracted staff across all HBKU Centers, Colleges, Directorates, and Units as well as HBKU affiliated entities. It covers:

- Workplace concerns and working conditions including interpersonal conflicts, and health, safety and work environment issues.
- Workload, scheduling, overtime, and compensation related issues for staff only excluding faculty and researchers.
- Administrative decisions affecting rights, duties, or morale.
- Application of university policies, procedures, and codes including code of conduct and other university codes when not covered by other university policies.

Exclusions: This policy does not cover the following issues governed by other university policies:

- Faculty related issues governed by the Faculty Grievance policy.
- Research Misconduct issues governed by the University Research Misconduct Policy.
- Discrimination, harassment, equal employment opportunity, disability, and retaliation related issues which are governed by other relevant University Policies.
- Performance appraisal related issues governed by the University Performance Management related policies including the Faculty Performance Review policy.
- Issues related to discretionary decisions such as hiring, promotion, appointment, employment termination, contract renewal or non-renewal decisions governed by other HBKU policies including employment and appointment related policies.
- Student related issues governed by the Student Grievance Policy.
- Student employment related issues governed by the Student Employment policy Corrective and disciplinary actions, taken under other University policies and procedures addressing issues outside the scope of this policy.

3. Terms, Abbreviations, and Definitions

The following terms and abbreviations used in this policy shall have the meanings defined below:

Term/Abbreviation	Definition
Complainant	The individual raising the Complaint or the Grievance.
Committee	Complaint and Grievance Review Committee
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction or concern that does not allege a violation of policy, procedure, code, contract term, or right.
Employee(s)	Any person engaged to perform work for HBKU under HBKU's direction and supervision.
ER	Employee Relations under HBKU HR.
Grievance	A formal written claim alleging violation of a specific university policy, procedure, code, contract term, or right. It may also result from an inconsistent application of policies and procedures.

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 3 of 8	

HBKU Community	Refers to HBKU employees and contracted staff including faculty, scientists, researchers, administrators, visiting faculty, consultants, postdocs, staff, and freelancers.
HBKU or University	Hamad Bin Khalifa University.
HR	Human Resource
Respondent	The individual against whom the Complaint or Grievance is directed.
Stakeholder	Individual involved or impacted by the Complaint or Grievance.
VP ARC	Vice President Audit Risk and Compliance
VPFA	Vice President Finance and Administration

4. Policy

4.1. General Principles

- 4.1.1. HBKU encourages members of HBKU Community to resolve issues at an early stage through direct, open, honest, and respectful communication.
- 4.1.2. All members of HBKU Community are entitled to file a Complaint or Grievance under this policy for issues covered by this policy.
- 4.1.3. Every effort should be made to deal with Complaints and Grievances promptly.
- 4.1.4. Complaints and Grievances must be filed within one (1) month of the occurrence of the incident or action leading to the Complaint or Grievance. In case of a disciplinary sanction imposed by HBKU on the Employee, the Employee shall submit a complaint to HBKU within seven days from the date of being formally notified of the sanction.
- 4.1.5. A Complaint or Grievance that has been fully reviewed and concluded under this policy may not be raised again through the HBKU Complaint and Grievance processes by the same individual on the same issue or for the same underlying reason except when new facts or evidence arise that were not available during the original review, and when ER determines that the new facts or evidence warrants further review and consideration.
- 4.1.6. Complaints and Grievances are handled objectively, fairly, and confidentially without retaliation. Any form of retaliation will be handled as per HBKU Anti-Retaliation policy.
- 4.1.7. Reasonable accommodation during the Complaint and Grievance process may be made available to individuals with disabilities upon request as determined by ER.
- 4.1.8. All parties are expected to cooperate and participate respectfully in the Complaint and Grievance process including sharing all information relevant to the Complaint or Grievance and cooperating with any investigation.
- 4.1.9. Time spent on the Complaint and Grievance process is considered normal working time, and supervisors must make reasonable efforts to allow members of HBKU Community to participate in such processes.
- 4.1.10. The initiation of a Complaint and Grievance process will not in any way reflect unfavorably upon the reputation or status of concerned members of HBKU Community.
- 4.1.11. Stakeholders may seek guidance on the Complaint and Grievance process and related matters from ER at any stage.
- 4.1.12. The Complaint and Grievance process can be difficult for all Stakeholders. HBKU encourages all Stakeholders to contact ER to seek help and support as needed.
- 4.1.13. If at any time during the Complaint and Grievance process, an action related to the Complaint or Grievance issue is initiated with an external body or authority such as Courts of justice of Qatar or a government administrative body, such as the Labor Disputes Settlement Committee, the University process will be terminated, and the VP

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 4 of 8	


ARC will be notified. Stakeholders must notify ER as soon as such action is initiated. The VP ARC, in consultation with the VPFA, will determine if the process is to be resumed or reinitiated or if alternative procedures must be followed.

4.2. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution Process

- 4.2.1. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution process is initiated when an Employee of HBKU or a contracted staff submits a Complaint or Grievance, using the Complaint and Grievance Form, either directly to ER or through the university established channels for submitting Complaints and Grievances.
- 4.2.2. Before filing a Complaint or Grievance, members of HBKU Community are encouraged to make an informal attempt to resolve their concerns through open and direct communication with the concerned parties or a neutral more senior level manager if the concerned party is their supervisor. If HBKU Community members feel uncomfortable in making such an attempt by themselves, they may seek assistance from ER.
- 4.2.3. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution process includes the following three main steps: the Informal Resolution step, the Preliminary Assessment step, and the Review and Investigation step.
- 4.2.4. While the Complaint and Grievance Resolution process typically starts at the Informal Resolution step, Complainants may escalate the process to the Preliminary Assessment step at any time during the Informal Resolution step. In addition, ER may decide, depending on the nature and severity of the incident and the provided information, to initiate the process either at the Preliminary Assessment step or at the Review and Investigation step.
- 4.2.5. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution process is completed following either the formal notification sent to the Complainant and the Respondent after completion of the Review and Investigation step or the satisfactory completion of the Informal Resolution or Preliminary Assessment steps without the ER decision to escalate to the next step or submission by the Complainant of a request to escalate to the next step.
- 4.2.6. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution process steps must be completed within the allocated time. The HR Director may grant reasonable extensions at each step of the process when needed.
- 4.2.7. The Complaint and Grievance Resolution process including all outcomes and decisions must be documented and records kept by ER as per university policies.

4.2.8. Step 1: Informal Resolution

- 4.2.8.1. Following submission of a Complaint or Grievance, ER representatives will attempt to resolve the matter informally through discussion and communication with concerned parties and appropriate University officials.
- 4.2.8.2. Mediation or other dispute resolution mechanisms may be considered before proceeding with the Preliminary Assessment step of the Complaint and Grievance Resolution process.
- 4.2.8.3. While Complainants may escalate the process to the Preliminary Assessment step at any time during the Informal Resolution step, they are encouraged to consider escalating to the next step only after genuine attempts to resolve the matter through the Informal Resolution step have been exhausted.
- 4.2.8.4. ER will consult with the appropriate university official who will make the final determination and decide on specific resolution actions or to escalate the process to the Preliminary Assessment step.

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 5 of 8	

4.2.8.5. ER representative will inform concerned parties of the outcomes of the Informal Resolution step and will ensure that the decision to proceed or not to the next step is clearly and formally communicated to the Complainant.

4.2.8.6. If the Complainant is satisfied with the decision and outcomes reached during the Informal Resolution step, no additional action is required, and the Complaint and Grievance Resolution process is terminated. If the Complainant is not satisfied, the Complainant may, within five (5) working days of the formal notification of the outcomes reached, escalate the process to the Preliminary Assessment step.

4.2.8.7. The Informal Resolution step must be completed within ten (10) working days following submission of the Complaint or Grievance. Up to additional ten (10) working days may be allowed by the Head of ER when needed.

4.2.8.8. The Complainant may not appeal the decision and outcomes reached at the end of the Informal Resolution step.

4.2.9. Step 2: Preliminary Assessment

4.2.9.1. The Preliminary Assessment step must be initiated within five (5) working days following the decision or the Complainant request to escalate the process from the Informal Resolution step to the Preliminary Assessment step or following the ER decision to initiate the process at the Preliminary Assessment step.

4.2.9.2. The submitted Complaint or Grievance will form the basis of the Preliminary Assessment. Thus, it is important that the submitted Complaint or Grievance clearly sets out the nature of the Complaint or Grievance, lists the specific issues in detail, and provides all relevant evidence and supporting information.

4.2.9.3. During the Preliminary Assessment step, ER may seek to gather additional information particularly when it is not clear who the affected parties and/or the Respondent are. ER may initiate conversation with concerned parties and assess whether additional concerns exist involving a particular unit or member of HBKU Community.

4.2.9.4. Based on the preliminary findings, ER will consult with the appropriate university official who will make the final determination and decide on specific resolution actions or to escalate the process to the Review and Investigation step.

4.2.9.5. Both the Complainant and Respondent will be formally notified by ER of the outcome of the Preliminary Assessment step and the decision to proceed to the next step or not. The Complainant may or may not be informed of the specific resolution actions taken against the Respondent, if any.

4.2.9.6. If the Complainant is satisfied with the outcome and decision reached during the Preliminary Assessment step, no additional action is required, and the process is terminated. If the Complainant is not satisfied, the Complainant may, within five (5) working days of the formal notification of the decision reached, escalate the process to the Review and Investigation step.

4.2.9.7. The Preliminary Assessment step must be completed within thirty (30) working days following initial submission of the Complaint or Grievance. Up to additional twenty (20) working days may be allowed by the Head of ER when needed.

4.2.10. Step 3: Review and Investigation

4.2.10.1. The Review and Investigation step must be initiated within five (5) working days following the decision or the Complainant request to escalate the process from the


Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 6 of 8	

Preliminary Assessment step to the Review and Investigation step or following the ER decision to initiate the process at the Review and Investigation step.

- 4.2.10.2. Following initiation of the Review and Investigation step, a Complaint and Grievance Review Committee should be established by ER, in consultation with the appropriate university official, normally within ten (10) working days of the initiation of the Review and Investigation step.
- 4.2.10.3. The Committee should include a minimum of three voting members in addition to an ER representative who should serve as a non-voting member of the Committee. ER should designate one of the voting members as the Committee chair.
- 4.2.10.4. If a Committee member becomes unavailable during the Review and Investigation step due to illness or other acceptable justification as determined by ER, ER will consult with the appropriate university official to decide on the replacement of the committee member by another member of HBKU Community.
- 4.2.10.5. The Committee should complete its review and submit its final report and recommendations within forty (40) working days of the date of establishment of the Committee.
- 4.2.10.6. The Committee final review report should include the following:
 - A description of the incident,
 - The issues considered,
 - The findings and facts,
 - Committee decision on whether each of the allegations is substantiated,
 - The recommended resolution actions.
- 4.2.10.7. ER will consult with the appropriate senior university official who will make the final determination and decide on specific resolution actions.
- 4.2.10.8. Both the Complainant and Respondent will be formally notified by ER of the outcome of the Review and Investigation step. The Complainant may or may not be informed of the specific resolution actions taken against the Respondent, if any.
- 4.2.10.9. The Review and Investigation step should be completed within ninety (90) working days following initial submission of the Complaint or Grievance. Additional twenty (20) working days may be allowed by the Head of ER when needed.

4.3. Complaint and Grievance Decision and Final Determination

- 4.3.1. The University shall strive to reach a decision and final determination on the submitted Complaint or Grievance within six (6) months of the date of initial submission.
- 4.3.2. ER will share the submitted Grievance form and all reports, findings, and facts produced during the Complaint or Grievance Resolution process including the Committee report when available, with the appropriate University official who will make the final determination and decide what, if any, resolution actions are warranted.
- 4.3.3. Final determination and resolution actions may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Dismissal of the Complaint or Grievance.
 - Corrective actions to address identified issues.
 - Disciplinary actions in accordance with the Corrective and Disciplinary Action policy.
 - Other additional actions as deemed appropriate particularly in serious cases.
- 4.3.4. Both the Complainant and Respondent will be formally notified by ER of the conclusion and outcomes of the Complaint and Grievance process. The Complainant may or may not be informed of the specific resolution actions taken against the Respondent, if any.

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 7 of 8	

4.3.5. ER, in consultation with the concerned units, shall monitor the implementation of the decision and all resolution actions.

4.4. Confidentiality

- 4.4.1. All Complaint and Grievance matters must be handled with the highest level of confidentiality. Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- 4.4.2. All Complaints and Grievance related documentation, hearings, discussions, and records made during the Complaint and Grievance resolution process and any subsequent appeal process will be kept in strict confidence and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

4.5. Malicious or Misleading Complaints and Grievances

- 4.5.1. If it is determined by ER that a Complaint or Grievance was filed with a false or malicious intent or a reckless disregard for or willful ignorance of facts, a disciplinary procedure may be initiated against the Complainant and disciplinary actions may follow.
- 4.5.2. If it is determined by ER that any party involved in a Complaint or Grievance process knowingly provides misleading information, a disciplinary procedure may be initiated against the party concerned and disciplinary actions may follow.

4.6. Record keeping

- 4.6.1. All Complaints and Grievance related documentation and written records made during the Complaint and Grievance resolution process and any subsequent appeal process will be retained and maintained by ER.
- 4.6.2. In certain circumstances, such as when there is a need to protect a witness, some records and information may be withheld and not shared by the University.
- 4.6.3. Records are to be treated as confidential and maintained for a specific period in accordance with the University document records and data protection policies.

4.7. Appeal

- 4.7.1. Stakeholders may, within seven (7) days of receiving formal notification of the Complaint and Grievance decision, file an appeal against the decision on one of the following grounds:
 - There is new evidence that may have a direct impact on the decision.
 - The Stakeholders believe that the decision was not appropriate.
- 4.7.2. For matters involving disciplinary sanctions imposed on the employee Respondent, the Respondent shall have the right to appeal to HBKU by way of a Complaint within seven days from the date of notification of the penalty. The Complaint shall be decided by HBKU within seven days of submission of the Complaint. If such period expires without a complaint, then it shall be considered rejected.
- 4.7.3. The appeal against the Complaint and Grievance decision must be made in writing to the VPFA using the Complaint and Grievance Appeal Form clearly stating the grounds for the appeal and providing additional evidence, if any, that may justify the appeal.
- 4.7.4. If the VPFA determines that there are no genuine grounds for the appeal, formal notification and decision will be communicated to the concerned Stakeholder who filed the appeal outlining the reasons for the decision. The VPFA decision is final and may not be subject to an appeal or grieved under the said policy.
- 4.7.5. If the VPFA determines that there are genuine grounds for an appeal, a Complaint and Grievance Appeal Committee may be appointed by the VPFA to be chaired by a member of HBKU Community designated by the VPFA.

Policy Owner:	VPFA Office			<div><div>جامعة حمد بن خليفة HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY</div><div></div><div>عضو في المؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation</div></div>
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources Directorate			
Policy Name:	Complaint and Grievance Policy			
Policy ID Code:	HR-ER.03.007	Rev. 00	Page 8 of 8	

- 4.7.6. The Complaint and Grievance Appeal Committee will have access to all related documentation and may further investigate the Complaint or Grievance considering only the stated grounds of the appeal rather than reconsidering all matters raised during the Complaint and Grievance resolution process.
- 4.7.7. The Complaint and Grievance Appeal Committee will submit, within 30 days of the submitted appeal, a new Complaint and Grievance report summarizing findings and recommended actions. For Complaints against disciplinary actions, the committee should submit its report within seven days of submission of the complaint.
- 4.7.8. ER will share all relevant materials and the new Complaint and Grievance report submitted by the appeal committee with the appropriate university official to reach a final decision on the submitted Complaint or Grievance. For Complaints against disciplinary actions, a final decision should be reached within seven days of submission of the complaint.
- 4.7.9. The outcome of the appeal process may not be subject to further appeal or grieved under HBKU policies and procedures.

5. Associated Procedures, Guidelines, and Supporting Documents

Complaint and Grievance Procedure
 Complaint and Grievance Form
 Complaint and Grievance Appeal Form

6. References and Related Policies

Anti-Harassment Policy
 Anti-Retaliation Policy
 Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
 Disability and Religious Accommodation Policy
 Corrective and Disciplinary Actions Policy

7. Source, Responsible Office, Authority

The Human Resources Directorate is responsible for the administration, implementation, and enforcement of this policy.